

The Pulse of Persia: Iranian F-1 Visa Applicants



Project Title	The Pulse of Persia: Iranian F-1 Visa Applicants
Project Summary	Review and translate public Farsi message boards for discussions between Iranian students about qualifying, applying, and interviewing for F-1 student visas.
Country	Armenia
Agency	Department of State
DoS Office	N/A
Post	YEREVAN
Section	CONS
Number of Interns	3

Project Description

The pursuit of higher education in the United States is complex and competitive, with hundreds of thousands of international students vying for limited university resources. After an international student is accepted to a university – many with partial or complete funding packages from their respective institutions – the competitive phase of their academic pursuit segues into the less adversarial but equally nerve-racking process of applying and interviewing for an F-1 nonimmigrant visa. Because there is no numerical limit on the number of student visas that the U.S. issues, qualified international students find themselves in the same boat as they approach their F-1 application and interview. There is a spirit of camaraderie and mutual support among these students, much of which takes place in online forums, where applicants communicate openly in their native language about their fields of study, funding packages, previous application successes and failures, and any number of other details.

While China is currently the biggest sender of foreign students to U.S. universities, a younger generation may be surprised to learn that this distinction formerly belonged to Iran. Over the last decade, the number of Iranian students coming to the U.S. has again been rising, and there were more than 12,000 Iranians in the U.S. on F-1 visas in 2015-16. The Department of State serves Iranian visa applicants primarily through consular sections at four posts in close proximity to Iran, including Yerevan. We aim to better understand how Iranian students understand and approach the process of applying and interviewing for a visa. For this purpose U.S. Embassy Yerevan seeks a team of 2-3 Virtual Student Foreign Service e-Interns to assist with navigating and translating online student discussion forums.

Desired Skills Interests

Additional Information

Excellent organization, written communication skills, and proficiency in Farsi (Persian) are required. Preference will be given to applicants with translation experience, strong vocabulary in common fields of advanced academic study, and a very good understanding of colloquialisms and short-hand expressions used in electronic communication. An interest in Iranian culture and educational systems will promote a mutually beneficial match.

Language Requirements

Language Speaking Proficiency	Reading Proficiency	Importance
Persian-Farsi	Minimum professional proficiency	Full professional proficiency Required